Forestallers and Engrossers

DETECTED:

With A PLAN for Restoring

PLENTY

ONCE MORE

To *Old ENGLAND!*

ADDRESS'D

To the Inhabitants of GREAT-BRITAIN.

12905

——*Hinc illæ Lachrymæ!*

THE SECOND EDITION, Enlarged.

K. 30. M

LONDON:

Printed and sold by R. HAWES, at N° 7. the Corner of Windsor-Street, *Bishopsgate-without*, 1772.

Sold also by Messrs. HAWES, CLARKE and COLLINS, Booksellers in *Pater-Noster-Row*: W. DOMVILLE, under the *Royal-Exchange*; W. OTRIDGE, behind the New Church in the *Strand*; W. DAVIES, in *Piccadilly*: and S. WEST, N° 316. in the *Borough*.

LICENS'D,

According to Act of Parliament.

December 26th. 1772.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

The PREFACE,

THE reader muſt obſerve that the following piece is chiefly calculated to ſhew the diſtreſſes of the poor people in the country places of England, together with the cauſes thereof. For although London ſuffers much, yet the poor in the country ſuffer abundantly more, as the diſproportion in wages is not in proportion to the prices of proviſions. But it muſt be obſerved, as London is wholly dependent on the country for a ſupply of proviſions, whenever the fruit of the country fails, the effects thereof are ſoon felt in London. For as the people of London in general, have not an opportunity of taking a view of thoſe things as they really are in the country, they are at a loſs to know how, or why it is ſo. And as they are not able to ſee any farther, they are ready to conclude, that the fault is in ſome perſons or things in London.

In this reſpect, I have had the advantage of many, not only in travelling,

but I had likewiſe the opportunity of converſing with rich and poor, yea the very poor. By this means I have heard the complaints and been privy to the diſtreſſes of the latter, and after making enquiry into thoſe things complained of, I have found the cauſes of thoſe dreadful effects ſo manifeſtly felt all over the kingdom at this time. Notwithſtanding this, I believe I ſhould have ſuppreſs'd my ſentiments in ſilence, if the ſighs and groans of the poor, with their moſt moving complaints, did not repeatedly echo in my ears. I have therefore given my readers an account of the ſame in the following pages, in a plain homely manner, ſuitable to the places, people and things I have ſpoken of, and in ſuch truths as manifeſtly carry ſelf-convincing proofs for their evidence, proofs that cannot be denied.

I have likewiſe ſhewn how *Plenty* may be once more reſtored, by propoſing two ſchemes; the ſecond of which will, I believe, be more acceptable, and leſs objected to, as it will be pleaſing and profitable to landlord, tenant, and the nation.

W. P.

FORESTALLERS AND INGROSSERS DETECTED, &c.

MANY and grievous are the complaints that abound at this time all over the kingdom. The dearneſs of proviſions is the middle and both ends of almoſt all converſation, more eſpecially among the middling and lower claſs of people, the greater part of whom will have it, that the butchers and bakers are the grand cauſes of the whole.

But let any candid perſon reflect for a few minutes; and I doubt not but it will appear to a demonſtration, that the hue and cry againſt them is really abſurd, and ſerve to diſcover a great deficiency in the knowledge of the preſent ſtate of things in that reſpect.

For my part, I am fully perſuaded that both thoſe tradeſmen, as well as thoſe who exclaim againſt them, would be equally glad if every kind of proviſion was cheaper than they are, for the following reaſons.

First, It ismoſt certain, that a far leſs capital would ſerve them to go to market with.

Secondly, The butchers would ſell abundantly more than they now do.

Thirdly, Their bills would be better paid, and oftner.

Fourthly, They could truſt with leſs hazard, as well as leſs reaſon for it.

Fifthly, They would be able to give ſatisfaction to their reaſonable cuſtomers, more eſpecially thoſe whoſe incomes are not great.

As I have here ventured to exculpate the butchers, and bakers from the common charge laid againſt them, a queſtion will now very naturally ariſe, namely, Who or what can be the reaſon of the preſent dearneſs of proviſions? To which, I anſwer, according to the common cry, *Foreſtalling* and *Ingroſſing* are the cauſes, the only cauſes of the preſent calamity. And thoſe who muſt relieve us if we are at all relieved, are accidentally concerned in the whole, yea, at the very root of all our preſent diſtreſſes.

And as ſome are totally ignorant, while others are greatly miſtaken in a matter of ſo great importance, I ſhall without any farther introduction, take upon me to ſhew, in the courſe of the following obſervations, who thoſe people are; partly from being an eye or ear witneſs, and partly from informations that carry their evidences with them too clear to want any further proof.

And in the proſecution of this my deſign, I ſhall firſt ſhew, how England flouriſhed twenty or thirty years ago.

Secondly,

Secondly, Shew the cauſes of the preſent dearneſs of proviſions.

And Thirdly, How thoſe cauſes may be removed, and plenty reſtored once more to Great Britain.

Then in the firſt place, I ſhall ſhew, in as brief a manner as poſſible, how England flouriſhed twenty or thirty years ago.

Herein permit me to appeal to you, who about that time lived in any part of the country in England. And I doubt not but you may very well remember, that there were at that time, in every pariſh within the compaſs of your acquaintance, plenty of ſmall farmers, who rented from ten to fifty pounds a year, the latter of which were counted ſubſtantial; and if one or two in a pariſh rented a hundred pounds a year, they were looked on as very topping farmers.

But it may likewiſe be remembered, that it were thoſe ſmall farmers that cauſed the markets to abound with ſuch plenty as we were then favoured with, of which I ſhall juſt mention a few particulars.

For inſtance, thoſe leſſer farmers had each of them two or three cows, theſe in their turn were likely to bring forth a calf, which ſerved either to adorn the ſhambles (making part of the plenty we then enjoyed) or elſe preſerved as ſtores to increaſe the ſtock, which ſtill anſwered the noble end of Plenty.

Again, from the milk of thoſe cows they made butter and cheeſe, and away with it to market as faſt as poſſible for the ready penny; and from the butter and cheeſe they had butter-milk and whey, of which a poor neighbour might have a jugg full for their children for fetching, they likewiſe reared their young

pigs there-with, and it is counted very good food for that purpoſe; Beſides this, thoſe little farmers bred a few geeſe, ducks, turkies, and other poultry, each of thoſe had eggs, and in their turns produced their young, which were all brought to market as ſoon as poſſible. Likewiſe they reared a little corn, which they could not keep back, but were obliged to bring it to market for the ready penny; this was the cauſe of the great gluts of corn our markets were then loaded with. Moreover thoſe little farmers had each of them a ſow or two, which in their turns had their young ones, ſome of which were brought to market and ſold for roaſters, and the reſt kept for ſtores. Then one could buy a buſhel of wheat for 2s. 6d. and could have a peck and welcome. Then one could buy a roaſting pig from four:pence to a ſhilling, I have been one of ſix that dined off a roaſted pig only, which coſt alive no more than ſix-pence, and ſome to ſpare; we had nothing with it but plain ſauce. Fowls were then ſold for eight-pence or ten-pence a couple; ducks at 10d. or a ſhilling a couple, which would yield as much fat as would ſell for three-pence. A gooſe at a ſhilling or ſixteen-pence, full fat; chickens and ſmall ducks in proportion. Eggs 5, 6, or 7 a penny. The common price of the beſt ſort of butter was three-pence half-penny a pound, by agreement, from May to Michaelmas, altho' at times it was cheaper; and as good ſkim cheeſe as any in the country at five farthings a pound, which was a drugg. Then a poor man could buy a ſtore pig for four or five ſhillings, and was able to feed one for himſelf, and perhaps one to ſell to any in the town who had not a conveniency of rearing one for themſelves; the common price of which, after killed and hung two days, was two-pence a pound. I have been one of two, who have bought a ſheep, and

after

after ſelling the ſkin and tallow, the meat ſtood us in ſeven-pence half-penny a quarter, which weighed ten pounds. Likewiſe thoſe little farmers, at the latter end of the year, had a little fat cow or two to ſell; then a tradeſman, or perhaps two joining, would buy one between them, and after ſelling the hide and tallow, the meat ſtood them in about five farthings a pound.

In ſhort, in thoſe days, every *induſtrious* poor man had a quarter or a ſide of beef, with a fat hog, a *1oowt.* of cheeſe, with a tub of butter laid in againſt the ſcarce time of the year, which is generally about Lent.

In thoſe days, tradeſmen were not obliged to go to the butcher for every day's proviſion. No, they could ſuit themſelves with poulry of any kind, full as well, and ſometimes better. Thus poultry made butchers meat cheap, and butcher's meat made poultry cheap. I have known the butchers going about to the tradeſmen on Monday morning, begging them to take a joint or quarter of meat, or a lot of beef, at almoſt any price.

Thus, in thoſe days, old England flouriſhed; the poor helping the poor, and they could not avoid it; for wanting the preſent penny, they could not keep back any thing that was fit for the market, and if one would not ſell, another muſt; thereby provoking each other, they hurried to market, ſo that at Baſingſtoke in Hants. the markets were frequently before day.

Thus, when plenty abounded, hoſpitality was found at the door of every cottage. And you to whom I before appealed, do well remember, that if a perſon did but call at a poor farmer's to aſk the way to any place, it was next to a cuſtom to aſk him to drink

a

a mug of beer or cyder, and eat a cruſt of bread and cheeſe. But alas! alas! It is not ſo now. No, it is all over! The graceful cuſtom's loſt; and the thirſty friend and hunger-bitten traveller may ſuck the cryſtal fount, or lick the duſt!

I am inclined to think, that by this time ſome are ready to ſay, "what happy days were thoſe!" Yes, Sirs, as many thouſands can now teſtify with grief! But they are moſt ſhamefully altered, as ſad experience every day feelingly convinces. Thus have I briefly ſhewn, how we were bleſt with plenty a few years ago; when ſmall farmers were numerous in every pariſh, plenty abounded in every Market-Town throughout England.

In the next place I ſhall proceed to ſhew, the *cauſes* of the preſent dearneſs of proviſions, and who are the very perſons actually concerned in the ſame.

I ſay (as before) *Foreſtalling and Ingroſſing* are certainly the cauſes: But who the perſons are, that carry on this iniquitous practice, is the chief thing to be diſcovered; for I will be bold to ſay, it ſtill remains a myſtery. Notwithſtanding *many* have attempted to fathom it, their lines have proved by far too ſhort. Yea, acts of parliament have been made, but to no effect, unleſs for convicting a few higlers (ſo called) for laborioufly gathering a few poultry from houſe to houſe, with a few eggs that would never have been brought to London if they did not bring them; and by thus painfully collecting proviſion in the country, they have furniſhed the London markets with many thouſands of thoſe uſeful articles which muſt otherwiſe have remained in the country. But who thoſe Foreſtallers are, is ſtill the queſtion to be anſwered, together with the practice that ſo effectually does the buſineſs.

Then

That I may treſpaſs no longer on your patience, I am not afraid to ſay, that the *Ingroſſers of Land* are the Ingroſſers of *all* that the Land produces. Thoſe I ſay, are the oppreſſive, ſturdy, man-deſtroying villains, who, at this time, eat up the poor, as the poor would eat bread if they could have it. And thus thoſe cormorants, as death unſatiate, go on, advancing with large and extenſive ſtrides, forcing the poor and more induſtrious farmers off their little livelihood, reducing them to ſuch poverty as may force them moſt humbly to couch at their feet for a morſel of bread. And yet, worſe than crocadiles! not ſhed a tear, while they thus diſtreſs and deſtroy wherever they come.

In order to throw a light on their proceedings, I ſhall here relate only one or two of the many tranſactions of theſe (I will not ſay honeſt) men, one of which I had from the gentleman's ſteward on the ſpot.

A gentleman ſent for one of his poor tenants in a great hurry. The poor man came with his hat in his hand, ſcratching his head, bowing and ſcraping as well as he could; yea, and perhaps trembling too, for you muſt know, he was a little behind hand in his rent: But that was not the thing.— However, he was ſoon made to underſtand the buſineſs; For the gentleman told him that his neighbour (naming his name) had been with him and offered him ten pounds a year *more* for the farm that he was in than he then gave, and would take a leaſe of it: But, added the gentleman, I will be very fair with you; as you are in it already, if you chooſe to continue in it, at what he has offer'd, he ſhall not have it. Here it muſt be confeſt, that this gentleman acted with a degree of honour not to be found in all who have power. By this, and ſuch kind of proceedings, it is eaſy to ſee, that gentlemen have

been

been provoked to raiſe their rents without any deſign or even a thought of ſo doing. Now let any honeſt man make this poor man's caſe his own, and then it will be very eaſy to diſcover the trouble and anxiety of heart he muſt be in at this criſis. For it may be obſerved, that with all his labour and induſtry, he could hardly pay the old rent of 30 pounds a year, but now is compell'd to pay 40, or turn out. And perhaps this was not the laſt attempt made on this poor man; for, like true blood-hounds, they ſeldom quit the ſcent till they have forced thoſe more uſeful men off the ground, on which perhaps their great grand-father was born, and on which their great grand-children might have been born, if it were not for theſe formidable hunters of thoſe poor farmers. By thus foreſtalling the lands, they gain their ends at the expence of impoveriſhing many poor families.

But to return. Who can blame this poor man if he ſhould raiſe one penny upon three for every thing he may ſell for the future, ſeeing it is but in proportion to what he is raiſed in his rent, on account of his wicked neighbour thus undermining him?

The following I had from a venerable Divine, which may be depended on for truth.

A Nobleman lately coming to a large eſtate, one of his tenants took an opportunity of making application to him for a farm that joined his, it being (as he ſaid, very handy for him. On which, the nobleman promiſed he ſhould have it. The other poor man hearing of it, went and made his caſe known to his lordſhip, alledging that his family had lived on it for ſeveral ages paſt, praying his lordſhip's favour that he might continue in it. His lordſhip being moved with compaſſion, aſked what was the rent of the other man's

farm

farm; and found it twenty pounds a year more than this poor man's. On which his lordship said, "I cannot be worse than my word:—But this I will do; If he insists on having your farm, I promise you that you shall have his."—This was *really* right honourable.

Let these instances put those in mind who are concerned in letting land, and they will soon find many similar cases, which will corroborate there with; yea, some, where it will appear that there are not above three or four farmers in a parish. This brings to my mind what a farmer told me about two years ago, that *his family* composed the greater part of the congregation at church on Sunday. On my asking the reason, he told me, there were but few people in the parish besides his family, and a few able farmers.

Again, a gentleman who has a farm in Essex told me, that there was then a farmer near him, who rented twenty-five hundreds a year. Who can tell how many little farmers have been monied out of their livelihood before he could obtain all that land?

Further. I have been lately informed that there is now one man near Weymouth in Dorsetshire, who, at this time, rents seven thousand a year. If this be true, (and I cannot contradict it) let it be remembered, those who thus ingross the land, do, as a consequence, ingross the product also. And suppose two or three such cormorants as these live near each other, how easily can they regulate the markets by consulting together; and either fill the market, or make an artificial famine at their pleasure. And as they gain their end by the art of raising the rents, it must be expected that they will pay themselves by raising

raiſing the price of what the land produces; or elſe they will keep it at home, and tell you that very few have any beſides themſelves; the reaſon is obvious, for very few have land to what uſed to be; for it is evident, that the land was never in fewer hands than at this time; and that every gentleman muſt know by the reduction of the number of his tenants; if a ſtop be not ſoon put to ſuch proceedings, God only knows what will be the conſequence! For theſe opulent farmers have not only turned out thoſe more uſeful farmers, but have with them, cut off all thoſe uſeful articles before-mentioned, with which they ſo plentifully ſupplied our markets.

Now, if what hath been ſaid concerning thoſe people, do not amount to *foreſtalling* and *ingroſſing*, by offering an advanced rent upon their neighbour's land, when neither the landlord or tenant had any thoughts of parting; I ſay, if this be not foreſtalling and ingroſſing, in their moſt formidable ſhapes, with all the dreadful conſequences thereof, I have quite miſtaken the ſenſe of the words, and likewiſe the perſons charged with the practice.

But before I quit this ſubject, I ſhall deſcend a little farther into particulars; and then let every candid man judge for himſelf. And as was before obſerved, thoſe who have the land have the product alſo.

And firſt, in regard to the article *Corn*. Thoſe wealthy farmers bring none to the market-places appointed both by law and cuſtom; no, for the meal-man and they meet at an inn, and over a tiff of punch, or a tankard of bumbo, ſtrike a bargain for

as

as many loads as they think proper, by a ſmall ſample, perhaps in a ſnuff-box. I have ſeen a corn dealer buy all the barley that a gentleman farmer had by a ſmall ſample which he took out of his waiſtcoat pocket looſe in his hand before it was thraſhed, even in the mow. I have likewiſe ſeen a farmer riding from one mealman to another, and, after ſounding them ſeparately, ſtrike a bargain with the beſt bidder.

Here it may be obſerved, that this corn not being brought to market, the poor, as well as tradeſmen, are cruelly debarred of the offer of one grain; and by the by, the turnpikes, as well as the markets, are defrauded of their toll by thoſe who are ſo well able to pay.

As I was travelling through Hampſhire, I fell in with a gentleman, with whom I had ſome converſation concerning the farmers ſelling by ſample; when he told me, that they had endeavoured to put the act againſt ſelling by ſample in execution; on which the farmers reſolved not to bring any to town, either by ſample or otherwiſe. And who, or what law can compell them, if they are not willing?

Hence it is plain to be ſeen, the time is come that theſe gentry can do with us what they pleaſe; and as there is no fear of *their* ſtarving, while they have ſuch plenty in their own houſes, yet they will ſtarve *us*, if we come not to their terms.

I ſhall here take the liberty of relating a melancholy truth. I have ſeen the poor people on a market-day in the winter time, with their money and their bags in their hands, almoſt ſcrewed double with cold and hunger, enquiring of each other, if they knew

where they could have a peck of corn. Others begging of the millar (where I happened to be) for God's ſake, to ſpare them a little barley, or any thing mixed or unmixed; but he had none for them, as he had none for himſelf. On my aſking the miller the reaſon of this melancholy ſcene, he told me that the mealmen buy up the corn of the farmers, who ſend it to them by the waggon loads, inſtead of ſending it to market, as they uſed to do. He moreover told me that out of pity to the poor people, who could not buy a ſack together, he had often bought a ſack and meaſured it out to them by the peck, although he loſt by it.

And if in this ſtarving condition they venture to a wealthy farmer's houſe, to beg the favour of him to ſpare a peck of corn, with the money in their hands, the anſwer is, he has none for them, for he cannot break a ſack, which would break a load that is going to the mealman.

Here, reader, make this your own caſe for a little while, and look upon yourſelf as one of thoſe poor people, and conſider. Is it poſſible, I ſay, is it poſſible, they can receive ſuch anſwers, and not be greatly mortified, eſpecially when they ſo often ſee the corn loaded ready to go off to the mealman, while the neighbours may ſtarve, becauſe they cannot purchaſe a load, or at leaſt a ſack?

Theſe are another ſet of Foreſtallers, I mean the *Mealmen*, who were not ſo much as thought of in moſt parts of the kingdom a few years ago. Theſe buy up the corn, either at the farmer's houſe, or at an inn by ſample; and be it which way it will, neither is brought to market. Thus many market

towns

towns, once famed for plenty of corn, have not had any for ſome years.

Now, if the hindering proviſions to come to market, by buying them up in this manner, be foreſtalling, then what may we call theſe people? — Reader, paſs an impartial judgement. And here, let it be obſerved, that the mealmen having got between the farmer and the baker, they have it in their power to pay themſelves a profit adequate to the intereſt of their money, and the expence of great ſtorehouſes, beſides the toll for grinding. Thus they having ingroſſed the corn, the bakers are obliged to buy of them, and are likely, as moſt fit, to have their profit; and from them to the chandler's ſhops, and retailers of bread in country places. (By this means the bakers are often tempted to give leſs weight, that they may afford to give a proper allowance to the retailers.) But I know not how this may be ordered otherwiſe in or about London, where neither time nor convenience will admit of people making their own bread.

But is it not heart-breaking for a poor man to think that he is forced to labour ſo hard to help to maintain the mealman, the baker, and others who ſell for them, who are got between him and the farmer! and if he grumbles none, none ſo ready to pronounce him idle as thoſe who thus oppreſs him. Thus the poor induſtrious man, who uſed to have a good wholeſome loaf for his family, from which he could cut a ſtout clumſy piece for each child, is now obliged to eat as good bread as any nobleman in the land, and at the ſame price.

But there were never better times, than when a poor man's wife could go to market and buy a little

corn

corn, and after carrying it to the mill, make her own loaf of the colour she knew would best suit her family; and save for her family what she is now obliged to contribute towards the maintaining those people who thus oppress them. * But if you were to see, as I have, the distresses of the poor in the country places, where the children are so naked, and exposed to such hardships in winter's nipping frosts and piercing winds, I may ask who could forbear to shed a tear? I could not: for the very countenances of those children crieth out aloud, *from oppression, Good Lord deliver us!* Besides this, those poor children being brought up in this starved and naked condition, their parents not being able to give them half enough of dry bread alone, and their flesh scarcely half covered, even with rags, and no learning, no, not even the alphabet: they know not how to offer them to service or be otherwise useful to society. And is not this one great reason why so many young people are forced by necessity to make begging their livelihood? Besides, numbers of young girls, for want of employment, have only this choice, either turn prostitutes or thieves; and because the former does not lay them so much under the lash of the law as the latter, many through ignorance, are perswaded, and from thence led to believe, that they get their living in an honest way; for say they, if we were to steal we shall be hanged.

But

* If the poor people in the country could make their own bread as usual, they could make it one fourth larger, as well as a one fourth cheaper than they are now obliged to pay for.

But to return, It hath been obſerved, by ſome of our well-meaning great men, that we ought to be thankful that the great farmers have ſo many ſtacks of corn laid up to prevent a famine. Indeed we have great reaſon at all times to be thankful to the original giver of plenty, and we ſhould be thankful if theſe great farmers did not thus keep it from us in their many ſtacks, but thraſh it out and bring it to market, that we may have it by the buſhel or peck, as formerly; then the now pretended ſcarcity would vaniſh, and the fear of famine not once be thought of. For what ſhould we be the better to ſay, it is well for us that we have a bank to put our money in, to prevent our being robbed; but if the bank be ſhut up, would not that ſoon make money ſcarce?

Again, ſuppoſe money ſcarce, tho' being lodged in the bank, and with the bankers. Would not the ſhutting up of thoſe treaſuries, to prevent a total ſcarceneſs, be the very thing that would make an artificial one, while there is plenty in abundance? And would not neceſſity force every gentleman to ſay, let the treaſuries be opened, that money may circulate, leſt I ſtarve?

Again, it hath been ſaid, that the cauſes of the late and dreadful calamities in the Eaſt-Indies are found out, but too late to ſave the lives of the unhappy ſufferers thereby; and great enquiries have been made to obtain farther diſcoveries. This I confeſs, is a noble undertaking. But may it not be ſaid, *Phyſician, heal thyſelf: And after taking the beam out of thine own eye, thou wilt then ſee more clearly the mote which is in thy brother's eye.*

For how far is the caſe of England from being ſimilar to that of the Eaſt-Indies. Are we not over-run and overcome

overcome with Ingroſſers of the land and its product? and what wonder! if the conſequence be the ſame in a ſhort time? And what is remarkable (if report be true) ſome of our well-meaning great men ſeem to be at a loſs how they may give them more encouragement, not conſidering that by ſo doing, thoſe mercileſs wretches would become more formidable.

This plainly ſhews, that ſuch gentlemen mean well; but applying their time to things more politic, have not had the opportunity of being ſo converſant with things relative to the well-being of the lower claſs of people, who are the ſtrength and ſupport of the nation, more eſpecially when invaded by our perfidious enemies.

But to return, let any gentleman of ſagacity ſound the matter wiſely, and he will ſoon find that there is corn enough to be had, and may be ſupplied with what quantity he pleaſes to contract for, if he will but give the price. Beſides, if there was a real ſcarcity, why (if fame be true) is there ſo much flour ſpoiled, by being laid up in ware-houſes? I remember that about four years ago, a baker in Southwark told me, he had ſuch flour ſent him, that he was obliged to cut it with a hatchet, and dreſs it over again, owing to its being laid by ſo long. *Query*, If the ware-houſes in London were examined, whether too much of this ſort may not be found at this time?

Here I muſt beg leave to digreſs a little, while I ſhew what I meant by ſome certain perſons being at the root of all this, though accidentally. And as hath been before ſhewn, that when the little farmers exiſted, it were they that ſupplied our markets with ſuch gluts of corn, that ſometimes they could not ſell their little matters for ſeveral market days toge-

ther

ther. This failed till about six weeks before harvest; and as those began to decrease, on account of their little stock falling short, then it was expected that the *great* farmers would rise the markets, according to custom, as constantly as harvest was drawing near; for this reason, as many as could afford it would lay in a little stock for that time: but this short interval not being sufficient to satisfy their avaricious appetites, they were often very much grieved. For behold the heart-reviving harvest makes its near approach! nay, it is come; and now the little farmer again receives the hoped for fruit of his laborious toil, with an increase suitable to, and sometimes far beyond his expectation.

This fresh favour being conferred, each, with the eagerness of a fond mother to succour her languishing child, hastens, as a post on express, to bring the glad tidings of their Donor's bounty. Thus, one following the other, they quickly lowered the markets, relieving themselves and the poor, and disappointing the most sanguine expectation of those great men, who sullenly retire with the disgust of an haughty coward when over-matched, whose tenmercies are notorious cruelties.

But presently they are called on for rent, when great and heavy complaints are made against the low prices of the markets; and to save themselves from being thought not able to pay, they exhibit their great quantities of corn laid up in store, only because they would not sell it at a market price; which if they had, they would have lessened their stock, and had their money, and the little farmers would have held out longer: But this was not what they wanted, for the raising of the markets

was

was the thing. However this complaint ſoon anima-ted our landed gentlemen (in authority) to contrive how they might eaſe them of thoſe griping pangs; the which was done, by paſſing an act for raiſing a fund on the public, to give ſixpence a buſhel, to encourage the exporters of corn to be more active for the future; ſo that if the poor would not give a price, they ſhall pay a tax to ſend it to thoſe that will.

This ſoon had its bleſſed effects in raiſing the markets. The farmers, on taſting this made-up diſh, ſmackt, and liked the reliſh well, which ſoon created an exceſſive thirſt for more land. But being at a loſs how to obtain their end, in the common courſe of what we call *plain dealing*, they at laſt hit upon the ſcheme of foreſtalling, by out-bidding and out-turning all their poor neighbours, who once fed the poor with *plenty*; but are now drove into poverty themſelves, as victims of their great neighbour's vengeance.

Theſe are a few of my reaſons for ſaying, that thoſe who can and muſt relieve us, are accidentally at the root of our preſent diſtreſſes.

Again, this thirſt for land to rear corn hath, in a great meaſure, ſuperceded the breeding of cattle; ſo that many farmers have abundance more land, and a far leſs quantity of cattle, leſs butter and cheeſe; and ſome articles, as was before obſerved, none at all. One of thoſe gentlemen told me, that he had ſold all his cows, except one, which was a good milker; of the cream we make butter for ourſelves, and the ſkim-milk we give to the hogs, inſtead of making cheeſe of it: By this (ſaid he) I ſave a rick of faggots in the year, and a ſervants board and wages; at the ſame time the land payeth better by ſowing corn.

This

This is worthy the notice of every conſiderate man, for here are ſo many cows and their produce of calves, milk, butter, cheeſe, &c. cut off at a ſtroke; and, inſtead of having thoſe things to ſell as uſual, he, with others like him, chearfully buys, and all for the ſake of raiſing corn, and yet pleads ſcarcity! But it was not ſo when the little farmers exiſted, for they reared cattle as well as corn, with every other article; and yet there was plenty of corn, even to a ſuperfluity (as hath been obſerved) with all ſorts of proviſions in abundance. And even now the few cattle we are favoured with, are moſt of them reared by the little farmers, who ſtill remain: how long, we cannot tell. Here I will be bold to ſay, that as faſt as the remaining ſmall farmers decreaſe, ſo faſt the price of proviſions will increaſe: For many of the great farmers pay very little regard to the breeding of cattle, as they can meet the drovers on the roads, and ſuit themſelves with what is ready brought up to their hands, and then feed London and other markets with them, as of their bounty; and as they can thus keep the cattle back, and make a thin market, which will be ſure to raiſe the price; ſo they can ſend them when they pleaſe to gain that price. By this means, the price of meat is ſo greatly advanced, that very few poor people are able to buy any.

All this while they ſweeten the matter, by joining with the populace, that every thing is very dear, and cattle ſo ſcarce, that there are but few to be had; but they do not tell you that they breed none themſelves.

The breeding of horſes is likewiſe ſo much preferred to breeding of cattle, that one of thoſe gentlemen told me, one horſe in a middling way, even at

two

two years old, would pay better than a yoke of oxen. This muſt cauſe a great declenſion, and make much againſt the breeding of cattle. Beſides the great demand for horſes to go abroad helps much to advance the price. But the following method may not be amiſs, to prevent our Engliſh horſes from going abroad. By paſſing an act for levying a tax of five ſhillings for every pound under eleven pounds; ten ſhillings for every pound between ten and twenty-one pounds; and twenty ſhillings for every pound above twenty, that any horſe, mare, or gelding may coſt, that may be ſent beyond the ſeas, (Ireland excepted;) and to prevent frauds as much as may be, let every perſon, who takes any horſes abroad, be obliged to produce a certificate from under the hand of the toll-keeper of the real price of ſuch horſe, &c. and make oath to the truth of the ſame before a magiſtrate. And if any maſter of a veſſel ſhall receive on board his veſſel any horſe, &c. without ſuch certificate being given him, and keep the ſame to produce for his own indemnification, he ſhall forfeit a certain ſum, half to the officer or informer, or between them; and the other half to the poor of the pariſh where the offence or offences may or ſhall be committed. This to be levied on the ſaid ſhip or veſſel.

But to return, this thirſt for corn and horſes, but corn in particular, has ſo reduced the dairies, that there is not half the butter and cheeſe brought to market as was in former times, the greater part of which is brought by the leſſer farmers; and, to make up for the ſmallneſs of the quantity, they have more than double the price formerly, ſo that one pound pays better than two in times paſt. For this reaſon many families can afford but little, and ſome none.

The

The little butter that is brought, they hawk from houſe to houſe, as if in a great hurry too, for they cannot ſtay; no, for if you do not like it at the price, I can have it at ſuch a gentleman's houſe, and thank me too, and away they trip. Thus the poor who buy any, are obliged to pay any price, or go without.

I have ſeen the inhabitants of many market towns greatly impoſed on thro' the negligence of unthinking magiſtrates; for if they were by proclamation to forbid any perſon buying any thing at their doors, or any where elſe, before it comes to market, on pain of being dealt with as Foreſtallers, then every one would ſtand an equal chance in the proper market-place.

I have ſeen the poor in ſome places ſpread lard or pot ſkimmings on their bread; others make broth with water and oatmeal, and a little tallow boiled in it, to give it the reliſh of meat, or boil a few potatoes with a ſmall morſel of bacon, when they can get it, of which they make broth for their little family. O England! Where is thy once boaſted ROAST BEEF and PLUMB PUDDING?

Again, very few of thoſe wealthy farmers breed pigs; and thoſe that do, keep them at home as well as the corn, and altho' a poor man would be willing to give double the price (in former times) for one to bring up for his family, he cannot have it. No, ſays the great man, I do not chuſe to break the lot; for I intend to keep them till they are grown up: Beſides I have promiſed the refuſal of them to Mr. Bacon-feeder, who will buy them all together.

Here is another ſet of foreſtallers. For if *they* did not deal in this underhand way, thoſe pigs muſt be brought to market: But theſe men ſave them the trouble; and after they have made bacon of them, (as the price of one of thoſe, when fed, comes to more than a poor man is poſſeſt of, at one time, for many years) they ſell them to the ſhops. And by that time the bacon-feeders and the ſhop-keepers have their profit, the poor man muſt be glad to have a pound at eight-pence or ten-pence, which is the price of a poor man's day's work in many places.

Such oppreſſion was not thought of when the little farmers exiſted. But now (as thoſe people are got between the farmer and the poor labourer, who uſed to buy them when young, and feed them at their door, the expence of which, going out ſo gradual, was not felt) the little ſtore pigs are ſo ſcarce and ſo dear, the poor are almoſt deprived of that privilege.

Again, thoſe great men rear hardly any poultry; ſo that they cannot ſend any to market, notwithſtanding many hundreds, I may ſay thouſands, have been ſold yearly from the ſame land in the years that are paſt.

Another very material article is almoſt cut off by thoſe men; for having got their lands ſecured by leaſes, they ſave the trouble of keeping their hedges in order, by cutting them down and rooting them up, as likewiſe all the wood that do not endanger their leaſes: ſo that thoſe little farms, that looked like fertile gardens, are now ſtripped of their fine fences

with

with the trees planted in them; * By which means wood is more than double the price it was twenty or thirty years ago; and what wood remaineth is in few hands, as other things are.

This is moſt grievouſly felt in all large towns, where there there is no coal near, eſpecially where great manufactures are carried on. It would make one's heart ach, to ſee a few ſmall children, in the winter time, hovering over two or three ſticks put end to end, and ſo naked, that they cannot venture to gather a few ſticks if they were to be had. And, if a poor man can get the favour of a peck of corn it is difficult to get it ground, (as the meal-men are concerned in moſt of the mills that uſed to grind corn for the people in the market towns;) and then his wife and children may ſpend half a day in gleaning a little wood to heat the oven, are in danger of being taken up for hedge breakers, and if not whipt, come off very well; ſo that between the ſcarceneſs and dearneſs of wood as well as corn, the poor, in the country villages as well as Towns and Cities, are conſtrained to buy bread inſtead of making it themſelves.

It is eaſy to ſee, from what has been ſaid, that thoſe great men, who have thus engroſſed ſo much into their hands, are uſing every method that tends

* I wonder that any gentlemen who is fond of game, ſhould ſuffer their land to be thus ſtript of ſo uſeful an article in many reſpects, and by this means the game is almoſt deſtroyed by the pochers.

to oppreſſion; and, if ſome method be not made uſe of, to put a ſtop to it, lamenting we may ſay, O England! what wilt thou come to in another twenty years!—

Thus I have juſt hinted at a few of thoſe things which are the real cauſes of the preſent diſtreſſes all over the kingdom; which, if ſeriouſly conſidered, we ſhall no longer wonder that things are as they are, while a few individuals are thus enabled and encouraged to ſecure their own intereſt, and enrich themſelves at the expence of impoveriſhing the moſt uſeful part of the kingdom. See Britain's ſons! how ye are threatened with either famine or ſword.—Deſperate choice! See how formidable their approach! how armed with weapons, on prancing ſteeds,* ready to cut down and trample in the duſt, men once for courage famed, the weight of which has oft made Britain's foes, with ſupple knee, for favour cringe!—But ſuppoſe the nation ſhould be once more involved in war, would thoſe crowing heroes quit their own dunghils and advance, charging ſword againſt ſword? or would they not look back on their already acquired lands at home, on which they reign, as petty kings, in all the freedom of a free nation, while they enſlave her ſubjects?

But, I will ſay, will they advance? I trow not, but will rather ſay, let thoſe go and fight who have nothing

* In alluſion to the farmers and their ſervants, who came to a certain market town, armed on horſe back to diſperſe the inhabitants who were aſſembled together, on account of the dearneſs of proviſions.

nothing to looſe. But where will the king have even theſe?—For the little farmers with their children and ſervants, who were as a nurſery for the army are drove off the land in the country, and gradually drained off to various parts of the globe in the following manner.

The land being foreſtalled, the old tenants are forced to quit and take ſhelter where they can, ſome in one town and ſome in another; ſo that moſt towns are overſtocked with people, while the country is become almoſt deſolate; this is the reaſon why there are ſuch complaints when harveſt comes, that hands are ſo ſcarce, they cannot have people to get it in. By this means moſt manufacturing towns ſwarm ſo, that there is hardly a *room* to be had but at a very dear rate. Here great numbers, who are men grown, bind themſelves for four or five years to learn a trade; theſe are ſuperceded by others who gradually drop in; ſo that, when thoſe are out of their time, they may ſeek employment where they can.

Thus great part of ſome trades are carried on by ſtout prentices, by which means many elderly journeymen are turned off, and obliged to ſeek relief from the pariſh, who could otherwiſe have maintained themſelves; and being thus ſuperceded, they are forced to ſpin out the remainder of their days in a dying life of pining hunger; while thoſe who are younger ſeek for employment where they can.

Thus multitudes from all parts flock to London, the great receptacle of all ſorts of artificers, who, for want of employment, are drove to make ſhift till they too often make one ſhift too many, by which they fall under the power of the law, and its conſequences.

Others

Others, rather than ſtarve or hang, enter, or rather partly ſell themſelves, to go beyond the ſeas: for, if I am rightly informed, every ſhip going to the Eaſt Indies, carries one hundred of thoſe for their defence as ſoldiers, who never return, beſides the vaſt numbers who are engaged as tradeſmen to go to the colonies. Theſe inſtructing others, manufacture thoſe articles which might otherwiſe be ſent from England.

Here it may be obſerved, that the ploughman, becomes a tradeſman, and then he is qualified for going abroad; ſo that our people and trade being thus drained off, what wonder if credit ſuffers when trade fails!

Beſides theſe, what numbers are ſhut up in priſons for debt! others tranſported, and a leſs number (tho' by far too many) hanged! moſt of theſe are young men, who complain of want of employment. Theſe having ſo much time on their hands, loiter at places of public reſort, where they contract new acquaintances, and prompt each other on to deſperate adventures, with.—"We may as well hang as ſtarve, or die by one's own hand."

But to return, thoſe who remain, and are become tradeſmen, can no longer be expected to come from the country places as buyers to conſume, for they are become the makers. And when the fair comes round, every body complains at the emptineſs of it, and that they never ſaw ſo few people at this fair in their life. But when we conſider what has been advanced, it may be aſked, where ſhould they come from? ſeeing that *one* farmer, who rents twen-

ty

ty-five hundred a year, ſtands in the place of at leaſt twenty-five; but as ſome deal leſs, while others deal more in this way, may we not ſuppoſe, that on an avarage, one ſtands in the place of at leaſt ten: and if this be allowed, what wonder if the markets and fairs are thinner by nine tenths than they uſed to be? And on the other hand, as tradeſmen are greatly increaſed, ſo buyers and ſellers are very near equal in number. On this account, tradeſmen ſtrive to underſell each other, and this leads them to lower the wages of the poor journeyman. He, to revenge himſelf, too haſtily quits his employer. Others, glad of bread, at any rate accept of the terms. Thus numbers of young people and their families are to be found in the workhouſes of London, and other towns, all over the kingdom, beſides the great numbers who have weekly penſions to keep them out. This gives poor encouragement for young people to marry, to load the pariſhes and fill the work-houſes with themſelves and their children.

Theſe things being deliberately conſidered, may we not acquit the marriage act of the charge laid againſt it for hindering marriages (whereby the number of inhabitants are much reduced) and with greater propriety place it to the account of the ingroſſers of farms?

Further, if the inhabitants decreaſe, thouſands can teſtify that corn muſt be increaſed; for it is undeniably evident there never was, by at leaſt a fourth part, ſo much corn land as there is at this time, and has been for years back, nor any ſuffered to be exported of late years; and yet there is ſuch a cry of ſcarceneſs, that it is enough (if any thing could) to raiſe a dead man to reſentment, and oblige every

expe-

experienced man to declare, there is a juggle ſomewhere, and the jugglers are thoſe men whom I have deſcribed.

Now, how can *this* be reconciled? The inhabitants decreaſe, and the corn land increaſes, yet there is a cry of ſcarcity? But I am well aware that the old ſtale ſhift prevails every year, namely, "the crops have been very thin of late years!"

Before I anſwer this vague ſhift, I would obſerve, that in the moſt plentiful years, there has been a failure in ſome places more or leſs; of this they make a great noiſe, becauſe it ſerves the turn for all, as they are careful to exhibit it as duly as their ſamples. For ſay they, there is a great failure in ſuch and ſuch parts of the country.

But ſuppoſe the ſeaſons have not been ſo kind for the laſt twenty years, as formerly. It is well known that great quantities have been exported during that time, and as the harveſts have been as plentiful and as kind ſince the prohibition, as before, and more eſpecially the laſt, may it not be aſked, what is become of the ſurplus?—The many ſtacks of old corn in the farmers yards ſpeak for themſelves.

Let it be allowed that the crops have been thin in ſome places; this I have obſerved, and have looked into the cauſe, and found it to be the inſatiable thirſt for land to ſow corn, and the great neglect in breeding of cattle in proportion thereto, ſo that they have not dung for manuring the land as it requireth; which has the following effect; namely, as ſoon as the blade is ſhot forth and ſpread a little, then the ear ſhoots forth likewiſe, and becauſe the ground has

not

not ſufficient heart to ſuccour it, both the ear and the ſtraw is ſo ſhort, (I have taken notice of the barley in particular) that the ſtraw has not been above a ſpan from the ground to the ear. Becauſe for the ſake of ſowing corn, many have plowed up common lands, which being naturally poor and cold, and manuring ſhort, and not a hedge to ſcreen them from the cutting winds, how is it poſſible they ſhould bring forth a full crop?

Beſides, on this account the corn is abundantly lighter than in former years, as the land have not ſtrength to nouriſh and fill the grain in the ear. This farmers are well aware of, for they will not now ſell by weight and meaſure, as formerly they did, for altho' the corn hath its bulk, it hath not the weight.

But as the manuring of land, and planting hedges, and keeping them in order, is attended with ſome expence, they will make huge objections to this, and ſay, I know nothing of the matter. But I will believe my own eyes, and will recommend every gentleman who travels, to ſatisfy himſelf, by taking notice of the incloſed fields of a moderate ſize, and he will find the corn is thicker, and the ſtraw and ear longer and kinder, than in moſt of thoſe open cold places. And although the old incloſures are ſtinted for want of manuring as well as the other land, yet they have much better crops, as they are ſo much ſheltered by the hedges from the ſharp and cutting weather in the winter and late ſprings, which muſt be prejudicial, by nipping the corn in the bud.

Thus I have ſhewn the cauſe of the thinneſs of the crops in many places. But becauſe the barren land

does

does not anſwer their vain expectation, they exclaim againſt the whole.

I was much confirmed in my judgment in this reſpect, by the declaration of a wealthy farmer, who told me, muck was ſo ſcarce that he gave four ſhillings a load for it, and ſent his team ſeveral miles to fetch it; and when I expoſtulated with him concerning it, he gave me to underſtand that the corn would pay for all. Another gentleman farmer told me very lately, that he gave ſix ſhillings a load for muck.

But if every gentleman who may let land for the future, would make it an article in their agreement, for the tenant to be obliged to keep at leaſt three cows for every twenty acres of land, this would not be the caſe; beſides it would anſwer many valuable purpoſes, by an increaſe of cattle, butter, cheeſe and muck, to enrich the land: then four acres would yield more than ſix of that which is ſtarved for the want of manure.

From what has been ſaid, it plainly appears, that a thirſt after corn has introduced an univerſal neglect of every other ſort of proviſion, as well as idleneſs in huſbandry; and yet they will make the corn pay for all, or elſe they will keep it in ſtacks to prevent a famine: For they will have their price of the mealman; this makes no odds to him, for he will have his price of the baker, and the poor bear the burthen at laſt. O England! how greatly art thou fallen, under the iron talons of theſe men, who regard not the cries of the poor paſſive, nor the threatnings of thoſe more a match for them; well knowing they are reſtrained by law, through fear of death, from helping themſelves!

Here

Here I could add much more; but ſhall content myſelf with the few hints that have already been given and proceed to the third thing propoſed; namely, to ſhew how thoſe things may be remedied, by reſtoring plenty once more to Old England, which is of the greateſt importance to many thouſand poor families, who are now ſtarving in a land once ſo famed for plenty. For the poor every where are diſtreſſed beyond helping themſelves: and the midling can hardly make ſhift to keep themſelves out of priſon: And as the farmers are become the medium, from them we can expect no help. It may then be aſked, who can help us? I anſwer the two grand aſſemblies of the nation can. But ſome may aſk, will they? I hope they will; The enquiry will follow. "How can this be done?"

I anſwer, in the firſt place, it is the hearty deſire of very many, that the act for allowing the bounty of ſix-pence per buſhel to the exporters of corn may be intirely obliterated. But it may be ſaid, does not the prohibition anſwer the ſame end? To which I reply no, it does not. For although they cannot now export, the price is kept up and the corn kept back, in hopes they ſhall when the time is expired. But if the act was intirely repealed, with a continuance of the prohibition, then the hopes of a reward from that quarter would be intirely cut off.

And let it be remembered, that although this act might have been well deſigned, yet it ſoon proved a burthen, the weight of which was doubly felt, firſt, by the tax; and ſecondly, by the riſing of the markets, which have been the cauſe of the many growing evils under which the working part of the nation have

have laboured without hope of help for many years back, but more eſpecially at this time. For the corn exporters being well informed of the prices of corn abroad, they can follow that price, ſo much the worſe for us; and the bounty, which is twenty pounds for every hundred quarters, adds much to their profit, and enables them to bid ſo much the higher againſt the mealmen who ſupply us; by which means the mealmen are provoked to bid againſt them, which of courſe muſt riſe the markets, as they are thus regulated by thoſe abroad. This makes well for the farmers, who are the gainers between both; and we the ſufferers, in a double ſenſe, as was before obſerved.

This act being repealed, and the ports ſtill kept ſhut, I ſhall now go on to ſhew "how thoſe ingroſſed lands may be better diſpoſed of" for the good of the nation in general.

Here let us ſuppoſe, for inſtance, that the land which the farmer in Eſſex hath ingroſſed, to the amount of twenty-five hundred a year, was divided into twenty-five farms, of one hundred pounds each, on an average; can it be ſuppoſed that it would not afford ample proviſion for twenty-five families in a comfortable manner? Certainly every perſon of the leaſt experience will allow that they would; and if ſo, then there would be twenty-five families inſtead of one. Here would be a vaſt increaſe of people as well as cattle, &c. For each of thoſe would have their family, with their ſeveral ſets of implements of huſbandry, and each would likewiſe have their ſeparate ſtock of oxen, cows, calves, ſheep, and pigs. Many of theſe would not be able to give

their

their land credit fufficient to harveſt; no, they would be obliged to rear cattle, make butter and cheeſe, to bring up pigs, poultry, &c. to get money for the preſent neceſſity.

Let us conſider this a little farther, and ſuppoſe that the twenty-five families juſt hinted at, and the ſingle farmer and his family that now occupies that land, were to make their appearance together in a market or fair; What a viſible diſproportion would there be in their numbers, but more eſpecially in their layings out for neceſſaries that each muſt have to wear? Would not this likewiſe make a great odds in regard of employing our manufacturers of all kinds, even from the hat to the ſhoe?

But ſuppoſe farther, that as much of this land, as conveniency would admit of, was divided into farms of fifty pounds a year, as doubtleſs they formerly were, would not this make yet a far greater diſproportion by ſwelling the number as well as their layings out.

Candid Reader, if you are a tradeſman, permit me to illuſtrate this by a plain ſimile. Suppoſe that all who are of your buſineſs were obliged to buy all the materials they wanted of one perſon (he having ingroſſed them all to himſelf) has not experience taught you, that ſuch a perſon would make all the advantage of you that he could, and very modeſtly tell you, that thoſe things are very ſcarce, and that none had them but himſelf: ſo that you muſt be obliged to take what he pleaſes to ſpare you, and at his price too; for if you do not like it you cannot help yourſelves, and you are obliged to put up with his

affronting behaviour beſides. But if inſtead of this one perſon, there were fifty, reaſon dictates it would not be ſo; for then if one ſhould uſe you ill, there is the other forty-nine to make choice of, each of whom, being ſenſible, if he did not ſerve you with as good materials, and as cheap as he could afford them, that others would: and thus each having forty-nine againſt himſelf, would be prompted by ſelf-intereſt to do his beſt to keep your favours, or elſe be in danger of ſelf-ſinking.

Having thus illuſtrated the foregoing ſuppoſition, it may be eaſily underſtood, what an advantage we ſhould gain if the lands were not thus ingroſſed in to ſo few hands. Beſides, it would prevent the jobbing of cattle, as each of theſe would breed cattle for themſelves. It is very eaſy for us to look back and recollect, that the ſmall farmers had no notion of jobbing cattle formerly, neither could they afford it. they were rather employed in breeding and ſelling to the drovers, &c. for conſumption. Then meat was cheap, becauſe there were not above one or two buyers between the firſt ſeller and the market; but ſince the farmers have become ſuch monopolizers of land, they give credit to the major part of their land for their corn from harveſt to harveſt, and employ the time between in jobbing of cattle. But it may be aſked, how can this be prevented, and things be recovered to their former ſtate, ſeeing thoſe men have ſecured the lands to themſelves by leaſes on moſt part thereof, ſo that the landlords cannot help themſelves or us if they were willing? but as I hope they are willing, I will venture to ſhew how this difficulty may be removed by a ſimilar caſe.

For

For inſtance, ſuppoſe I am indebted to you in the ſum of five hundred pounds by bond, and I ſhould refuſe to pay you, or perhaps am not able, on which you put me in priſon; but preſently there comes forth an act of inſolvency, which intirely cancels my bond, and ſets me at liberty, freeing me from every obligation therein contained, without paying you a ſingle farthing.

I ſay, is not the ſame power as able to make an act which may as effectually cancel thoſe leaſes as my bond, or the many thouſand bonds that have by this means been cancelled from time to time; then the difficulty is removed at once; and thoſe who are willing to do us good, will be at liberty to diſpoſe of their land, as they for the future ſhall think proper, for the general good of the nation.

But ſome may ſay, "the caſes are not ſimilar." No?—Suppoſe people are ſtarved for want of the neceſſaries of life, out of priſon as well as in priſon, are not the effects the ſame? and do they not equally call for redreſs, according to the different manner of oppreſſion?

Such an act ſhould not affect any who do not rent above above one hundred pounds a year, and all thoſe who have one hundred pounds a year of their own eſtates, ſo as to make them liable to pay double taxes for all they may rent beſides.

But as I deſpair of this taking place. I ſhall take the liberty of propoſing a ſecond, which will bring the pleaſing reliſh of gain to all who may be concerned therein; yea, and what ought to be our chief-eſt pleaſure-taking object, is, that the whole nation

will be ſo much the better; that all our wants in reſpect to proviſions will be plentifully ſupplied, even to a ſuperfluity, ſo as to enable us to relieve a poor neighbour, inſtead of conſigning him immediately over to a work-houſe.

This and more will be readily granted, by all who will underſtand the following general propoſitions.

Firſt, it will employ thouſands, many of whom now often want bread being deſtitute of employment, for which reaſon they will offer themſelves willingly.

Secondly, it will greatly encourage agriculture, propagate the breeding of cattle, with an increaſe of all ſorts of proviſions to an incredible decree; which is the very thing we ſtand in need of at this time.

Thirdly, It will greatly add to every gentleman's eſtate who may be concerned therein.

Fourthly, It will greatly increaſe the king's revenue.

Fifthly, It will greatly increaſe population.

Sixthly, It will greatly increaſe the income of many poor clergymen.

Seventhly, It will enable ſuch pariſhes to employ all thoſe, who are ſupported by them for want of employment and put it in their power to maintain themſelves. It will likewiſe afford a more ſalutary relief to thoſe who are worn out with old age.

And in order that I may proceed fairly in this matter, permit me to remind all who have travelled

through

through any part of England or Wales, where you have often had preſented to your view many wild, uncultivated, uninhabited, and almoſt unbounded tracts of land, the which do not bring the owners thereof one farthing an acre in the year; and for five, ten, fifteen, and, in ſome places, twenty, I may add thirty miles, not an houſe to be ſeen that can afford the leaſt refreſhment for man or horſe, let your caſe be ever ſo deſperate, no, not even to ſave life it ſelf.

For example's ſake, let it be ſuppoſed that any gentleman of whatever noble birth or character, was travelling over Saliſbury Plain, where there is no ſort of refreſhment or help to be had for near twenty miles. And ſuppoſe any accident ſhould happen to himſelf, or any of his company, or ſuppoſe his horſes fail, or his carriage breaks down, there is not a dwelling to afford any help, but there they muſt remain. Beſides, on this and ſuch places a perſon may be robbed and murdered, without having the leaſt hope from a retreat, there being no houſe or the leaſt cottage to be ſeen.

But ſome have ſaid, that many robbers have been harboured in ſingle houſes on ſuch places. I anſwer, accidentally they may, as well as any honeſt traveller owing to the fewneſs of houſes on the road. But *there* is not *one* houſe for honeſt or diſhoneſt; and it muſt be allowed, that the more inhabitants the leſs danger of this, and the greater probability of preventing as well as detecting ſuch perſons.

Here let it be obſerved, that I do not intend to draw the attention of any to this place alone; no, for this place, large as it is, is but as a duſt in the balance

ballance, in compariſon of the many other places in moſt counties in England and Wales, which, if they were properly attended to, and encouragement duly given, to make ſuch improvements as they would admit of, they would ſoon anſwer the moſt ſanguine expectations.

And for our encouragement, in this reſpect, let us look back, and, upon a ſhort recollection, we may remember what great encouragements have been given to thoſe who were willing to go and ſettle beyond the ſeas; by giving them land, and providing them with implements of huſbandry, and all other things neceſſary for the improvement of the ſame. Then I ſay, if the ſame ſcheme was adopted at home, thoſe large tracts of barren land would ſoon be ſtripped of the melancholy aſpect they now wear, and be cloathed with a verdure, inriched with ſuch ſtocks of cattle, and ſo peopled with inhabitants, that it would charm the heart of the beholder, and cheriſh the bodies of multitudes who are at this time drooping for very want of the neceſſaries of life.

And have we not as good a right to be encouraged at home, and to expect every help that can be given us, as any part of King George's dominions abroad? eſpecially if we conſider, that every one has an undoubted right to partake of what he for many years hath been, and ſtill is, a contributor to? For there is not a ſingle tax laid on the nation, but every individual bears his part, in proportion to his ſituation in life; and it conſequently follows all have an undoubted right to call upon their repreſentatives to apply to that fund for ſuch help as the nature of their circumſtances ſhall require.

And

And as it may be ſuppoſed that they are now paying you a viſit in the country during the vacation in town, and may juſtly expect your thanks, according to the merit of their good offices during the laſt ſitting; they may likewiſe be expected to conſult with you what they may next enter upon, that may be moſt for the good of you whom they repreſent in particular, as well as the nation in general.

Among other things would it not be well for you to recommend unto them your moſt deliberate ſentiments on this head, and in a becoming manner, requiring them ſtrenuouſly to inſiſt on your being relieved in this reſpect, or, in any other that may do as well. And while they thus conſider it their *honour* to repreſent *you*, and their *duty* to ſerve you in all ſuch reaſonable caſes, You, in grateful return (it is to be hoped) will be mindful to ſupport them with your Votes and Intereſts to continue your faithful Repreſentatives, whenever they ſhall have occaſion for the ſame.

But to proceed, having before hinted what large tracts of uncultivated lands there are all over the kingdom, permit me to ſhew how they may be moſt excellently improved, to the great advantage of both rich and poor. And this may be very eaſily done, if the two grand aſſemblies of the nation will but lay it to heart, by paſſing an Act of Parliament for enclo-ſing all commons, downs, chaſes, foreſts, plains, and heaths, *for the good of the Poor*, and them *only*, in ſome ſuch manner as I ſhall herein mention, which will undoubtedly afford the moſt ſalutary relief, in a very ſhort time to us, and for ever ſecure to our poſterity plenty of all thoſe neceſſaries, for want of which the nation is at this time ſo much diſtreſſed.

Here,

Here is an almoſt unlimited bound for all our compaſſionate and ſympathizing Patriots, who wait, (or rather wiſh) for an opportunity of diſtinguiſhing the real regard they have for the nation in general, but the poor in particular: At the ſame time ſhewing an abhorrence to that ſordid ſpirit of ſelf-intereſt in ſome, who while they ſee a nation ſinking, enrich themſelves, by plundering the wreck.

A queſtion may ariſe, "Suppoſe an Act of this kind ſhould take place; how could it be done for the good of the poor and them only, in ſuch a manner as to anſwer the deſired end? For we cannot expect that the great farmers can bear to ſee this, without attempting to have ſome hand in it?—To which I anſwer, this may be done in the following manner.

When thoſe common lands are to be incloſed, let them be divided into lots of ſixty acres * and no more, with a lot of ſuch ground, as may be thought too wet for paſture or tillage, on which ſhould be planted ſuch wood as ſhould be thought moſt agreeable to the ſoil. This being done, let the poor people be ſettled in the pariſh where they reſide, and no doubt but they will offer themſelves willingly. And if any land be ſpare, (as without doubt will be the caſe in many parts of Wales) then let others be admitted

* It is aſſerted by the beſt judges that two acres and a half of paſture land is ſufficient to keep a cow for a year. But we will here allow three acres each for ſeven, which makes twenty-one; then there remains thirty-nine for other purpoſes.

admitted to partake of the ſame, and none to be refuſed a ſettlement while there is land on which they are willing to ſettle.——Thus we ſuppoſe the land to be marked out, and people appointed to ſettle there.

Let a leaſe of one hundred years be given to each ſettler, renewable for ever; and no perſon be ſuffer'd to ſell, mortgage, or bargain for the ſame, whereby any profit may ariſe to them for quitting, giving, or bequeathing the ſame to any perſon or perſons; as ſuch proceedings would introduce a *jobbing* of thoſe lands and raiſing of the rents, ſo as to riſe the price of its product, which is the preſent caſe, and would entirely deſtroy the original intention of reſtoring plenty and cheapneſs of proviſions. Notwithſtanding ſuch perſons may give or bequeath their leaſe to whom they pleaſe, at or before their death, but without any fee, reward or gratuity of any kind. And if any perſon or perſons ſhall be ſuſpected of buying the ſtock, or any part of the ſame, or any thing elſe, of any of thoſe ſettlers, or any perſon for them, at an exorbitant price, by way of gratuity for quitting their ſettlement to them; ſuch perſons being convicted of the ſame, by a jury of twelve men (not ſettlers) at the quarter ſeſſions for the town or county where ſuch offence or offences may or ſhall be committed, ſhall (both buyer and ſeller) be turned out of poſſeſſion, and for ever totally diſabled from having any part in thoſe ſettlements any more.

The leaſes being thus given, the rent ſhould not commence at leaſt ſeven years after poſſeſſion, during which time to be exempt from all taxes, tithes or dues whatever (turnpikes excepted;) here neither the king or landlord will be loſers, as the land

brings

brings nothing in already: by this additional encouragement, they will recover themſelves, ſo as to be able to pay the moderate rent of five ſhillings an acre, for the firſt twenty years, and ten ſhillings an acre for ever after. Likewiſe every tenant ſhould be obliged to live on the ſpot, and hold no other land under any pretence whatever, either by any other perſon for them, or in any other name, on pain of forfeiting their leaſe, not to the lord of the manor, who is ſuppoſed to be the landlord, for that would have a bad tendency in many reſpects, but to one of the pooreſt men, who has not yet been appointed to any ſettlement before; and on the ſame terms as the firſt leaſe, and on no other, without fee or reward.

But as there are many poor people, who have ſmall dwellings already, with two or three cows, &c. on the borders of thoſe places, ſuch, not exceeding ten pounds a year, may be permitted to partake with others; and if their poſſeſſion be that of a tenant at will, be obliged to quit it when the rent on the new ſettlement ſhall commence; and if by leaſe, then to quit it as ſoon as the leaſe ſhall expire. It will likewiſe be exceedingly expedient, for reaſons following, that all thoſe lands ſhould be incloſed with hedges of growing wood, and conſtantly renewed as faſt as any ſhall decay: and if any ſhould neglect to keep them in repair, after proper notice given, let a perſon be employed, and the tenant be obliged to pay the ſame.

Thoſe incloſures ſhould not be more than four or five acres each. Thoſe hedges, with a few trees planted in them, will in a ſhort time produce a ſufficient quantity of wood for their own uſe. And with

the

the other woods on the wet land, and in ſteep bottoms, where plenty of oak may be planted, will, in a great meaſure, recover that article, and enable them to ſell to the relief of very many who are now much pinched, through the ſcarceneſs and dearneſs of that indiſpenſibly uſeful article.

It will be highly expedient for thoſe Woods to be hedged in, and no cattle or ſheep ſuffered to go in, as they will eat the buds, and ſpoil the growth of the wood, if not quite deſtroy it. This ſhould be a ſtanding rule with a forfeit to the Lord of the Manor for every ſuch offence as in caſes of treſpaſs.

Beſides, the uſefulneſs of thoſe woods and hedges will be manifeſtly experienced, as they will be excellent ſcreens to ſhelter the cattle from thoſe ſharp and cutting winds, which on every naked common they are expoſed to. The thoughts of which makes every traveller in thoſe ſeaſons ſhudder at entering on ſuch diſmal places. They will alſo be a very great preſervative for the ſheep, eſpecially the ewes in the time of lambing, and prevent great numbers of lambs from ſtarving, as is often the caſe on thoſe open commons, where there is no ſhelter for them from the rapid force of the northern winds. Thoſe incloſures will likewiſe ſave the expence of keeping ſhepherds, by ſhifting the ſheep from one incloſure to another, which may be done by a child, while thoſe men may be employed in ſome other uſeful and more manlike employment.

But I am well aware, that the great farmers will object to theſe common lands being encloſed: "For, ſay they, On theſe we keep our ſheep."—But let it be remembered, that it is only theſe great ones that

are

are able to keep ſheep at this time, as that article is in few hands as well as others; and if a poor man is able to buy a few ſheep, he cannot afford to keep a ſhepherd, and if he turns them looſe on thoſe wide places, he is not ſure of ſeeing them again, by which means he is debar'd of keeping any. But if he had a few incloſures to put them in, he would be incouraged to gratify his eager deſire of keeping and breeding ſheep as well as his great neighbour, as his hedges will anſwer the end of a ſhepherd as well as many other valuable purpoſes.

The following every experienced perſon will allow. That altho' a great farmer here and there keeps a a great quantity of ſheep, yet a multitude of theſe little ones each having a leſſer quantity, will by far exceed their number, which added to the other muſt make a pleaſing increaſe. Beſides theſe little ones could not keep them back till they were ready to drop under their heavy burdens of fat, the greater part of which is converted into ſoap and candles. No: for they would be obliged (as well as glad) to ſell them as ſoon as in a tolerable degree they were fit for the knife. Beſides the great numbers of other cattle that the little farmers muſt breed would at leaſt equal the number now bred by the great ones. This would not ſuperceed the great farmers breeding cattle or ſheep, but would be an additional increaſe of both, which will make *at leaſt* two for one in a ſhort time.

What a pleaſing ſight will this make, to ſee two thouſand cattle in Smithfield-Market inſtead of one, and ſo in proportion in every market-town thro' England! And who can hinder it while our moſt gracious King and both houſes of Parliament are willing?

Thus

Thus have I brought the matter so far on: but now a difficulty arises on account of the poverty of the people, who are proposed to be settled on these lands; for they are supposed to be so indigent, as not to be able to build a little place to live in at the first, or to make those fences that may be required of them; but this serves to make them so much the more the real objects of royal compassion, and excite the notice of a prince, happy in the felicity of his people.

Some may be apt to ask, How can they be assisted, seeing the nation is so far in debt already?

This, I presume, may be done in the following manner: When the act for allowing the bounty to the exporters of corn is repealed, let the tax which paid the same, with the money which has not been applied to that purpose (since the prohibition) be fixed, so as to give all the encouragement that may be, to the end that we may once more enjoy plenty in our borders.

And who, that has an honest heart, can refuse to put his shoulders to a work so praise-worthy as this? and who, except these forestallers and ingrossers, will be loosers by it? Can these possibly imagine, that so benign a sovereign and his parliament will consider the interest of a few individuals, when the interest of the nation in general stands in competition?—Vain imaginations those! they have no room in the heart of him who loves his country.

But to return: seeing that this will lay no other burthen on the nation than has already been laid; how easy is the transition made, and those monies

applied to the better purpoſes of granting a ſum, not exceeding twenty pounds, for building each of them (who have not a dwelling already on the borders) a ſmall place for preſent uſe. Theſe to be built as near the common road and each other as the ſituation of the land will admit. And that they may be able to hedge the land in, in proper time, ſuppoſe the ſum of one ſhilling a perch (or according to the cuſtom of the country) be granted, to be paid as faſt as done, for making a ring hedge of live wood, each perſon having the opportunity of working on his own premiſes. And thoſe poor people who have no cattle, ſuppoſe the ſum of ten pounds be granted each, to enable them to purchaſe ſome little ſtock to begin with; and not be permitted to ſell or kill any cow calves till they ſhall have ſeven cows, *, which ſhould be the leaſt number that each perſon ſhould have for a ſtanding ſtock: And if any ſhould be found artfully ſelling their ſtock, or any part of the ſame, in order to partake of the bounty, let ſuch perſons for every ſuch offence, forfeit double the price to the landlord, and be excluded any benefit as above.

And

* Let any perſon of judgment calculate the increaſe of cattle, hides, tallow, milk, butter, cheeſe, pigs, poultry, eggs, &c. that only one of theſe will make, then the bleſſed effects of multitudes will ſoon appear ſo deſirable, that every *honeſt* man, who *really* loves his country, will gladly contribute all the help in his power, to procure relief in ſuch diſtreſſing times as the preſent are.

And to prevent abuſes in ſo noble an undertaking, it may be proper to appoint a perſon in every county or riding, to inſpect into the due execution of the ſame, who would not be of that mean ſpirit to ſtudy ſome bye ends for himſelf, either by receiving fees or preſents from any perſon, whereby he may be biaſſed to act partially, and by that means fruſtrate the good intended by a ſcheme for the relief of the poor in particular, as well as the nation in general.

What good effect may we not promiſe ourſelves from ſo noble an undertaking as this, which will be better felt by ſucceeding generations!

And as nothing is ſo deſirable as an increaſe of proviſions, this will once more furniſh us with a ſet of little farmers, who cannot fail to ſupply us plentifully with all thoſe neceſſaries we once enjoyed, but now ſtand in need of, for theſe will never be able to keep back the product of their little farms.

This would likewiſe enable the great farmer to lay up more ſtacks of corn in ſtore againſt any failure that may happen in the coming harveſts, to prevent a famine, for which they ſhall be well paid.

But to return to the little farmers: Theſe will give us the pleaſing ſatisfaction of the firſt fruits of their induſtry, as ſoon as they can get it ready. Then ſhall we ſee as in the memorable days of old, men, women, and children flocking to market, each bringing the frugal-gotten penny-worth for the ready penny; and then ſcudding into ſome ſhop, gladly lay it out for ſome neceſſary uſe! Then may we expect to ſee our manufactures of all ſorts flouriſh at home, and not wholly

depend on foreign trade.—Then the people in the country will have no need to quit their rural employment, to ſeek bread they know not where!

Then there will be people in the country to wear what may be made in the towns—then will the induſtrious huſbandman feed the tradeſman's family with plenty; and how will he, in kind return, cloath the huſbandman's back! How many thouſands would then creep out of the obſcurity of workhouſes with which the pariſhes all over the kingdom are now unhappily burthened, who are not able to ſupport them with half what nature muſt needs require; by which means many pine away with weakneſs, and bring on diſorders, which proper exerciſe and free air, with a proper allowance of food, would often prevent, as well as recover to a good ſtate of health!

This ſcheme would likewiſe give encouragement to the riſing generation, to think of ſetting at home, and following their innocent employments. Then how would the young men and maidens chearfully join hands in wedlock, making the marriage bed honourable, and joining in the pleaſing taſk of labour and induſtry, ſpread themſelves and little families, over the now barren ſoil, improving as they go, and feeding us with the invaluable produce! Thus will our tables once more be ſpread with plenty, ſeaſoned with the delightful ingredient *Cheapneſs*.

Here one may attempt in vain to enumerate the happy conſequences that muſt unavoidably attend an improvement ſo much to be wiſhed for!

But many objections will be made to this, by thoſe who are afraid of their own intereſt failing: For want

they will tell us, that thoſe lands are ſo barren, it will not anſwer to beſtow labour upon them. But may we not reply, "Why then do *they* covet ſo much, if it were not worth *their* while; and if ſtill more liberty was given them, would they not readily embrace it?

But to make this clear, permit me again to appeal to all who have travelled through any part of England or Wales. Have you not obſerved a viſible difference between the commons and incloſures round about them, both in reſpect to the plowed land and meadows: there being only the thin partition of a hedge to divide them? But it may be ſaid that the incloſures are better lands than the commons. This by no means can be granted.

For can any reaſonable man be perſwaded, that the hedge hath ſo nicely divided between the good and the bad land? No, it is abſurd. For if that joining to it was to have the ſame pains taken with it, it would be full as good as the other, according to the ſituation and quality of it.

Again it may be ſaid, "that there is a great deal of boggy land.—And what country is free from it more or leſs? But where people are diligent in improvements (as the little farmers in general are) they will not throw away ſuch land. For it muſt be allowed, that many boggy lands do produce vaſt crops of wood for firing, and many other conveniencies.

But to wave this, it is well known that there are many thouſands of acres of found land, and as well ſituated for improvement, as any improved land round about it; but it is at preſent of no uſe for

want of proper authority to protect perſons in ſound and quiet poſſeſſion of the ſame, after they may have beſtowed coſt and pains to bring it to bear. For where people have leaſes granted them, they have generally made ſuch improvements as can hardly be believed, were it not that the premiſes evidently ſpeak for themſelves, even to the tops of very high mountains in many parts of Wales. And yet there are large tracts of the ſame land remaining unimproved for want of encouragement. What a pity it is, that at ſuch a time as this, when proviſions are at ſuch an exorbitant price that thoſe lands ſhould be held back, and not ſuffered to be improved! as it would anſwer the moſt ſanguine expectation of profit and plenty to all who may be concerned.

Thoſe things duly attended to, and encouraged, what an increaſe of agriculture would this make; what multitudes would be employed; and how would the uninhabited places be covered with families, and ſtocked with lowing oxen, kine with milk, and bleating flocks in abundance, with pigs, poultry, calves, lambs, with every neceſſary of life, in a flouriſhing manner, even where there is not now ſo much as a ſheep-cot to be ſeen, or any other place of ſhelter for a traveller, let the extremity of the weather be ever ſo great; no, nor a trace that can be depended on to lead him to any place either near or diſtant.

But when a ſcheme of this kind ſhall take place, that difficulty will be removed; and, as was before obſerved, what an increaſe will there be in agriculture, people, cattle, poultry, gentlemens eſtates, the king's revenue, the poor clergy, the pariſhes eaſed

all will be profited by the

things, where they are not ſo much

now.

Here is an opportunity for

do; then, with humility I ſay, Up, ye

the Nation! help

ſtate.— Put forth all your ſtrength like

lour, like men of true old

her, that ſhe may recover her

ſhe ſend forth her ſtreams of

will rejoice the hearts of her ſons and

making them ſtrong to labour, and willing

you, in grateful returns, the fruit of their

induſtry!—This is the way we ſhall have

hearts, ſtout and able to defend her, with the

heroic ſpirit of a Briton whenever aſſaulted by

thoſe who grudge our happineſs, and envy our pro-

perity!

POST-

The POSTSCRIPT,

As the Poor ſtand in need of *immediate Relief*, I would humbly ſubmit to the Public, the Propriety of the following Method.

THAT an Abſtract of the Laws made againſt Foreſtallers and Ingroſſers, be ſent to the Sheriffs of every County in England, ſtrictly charging and commanding them to have the ſame reprinted, and fixed on the doors of all Churches and Chapels, and all the moſt public places in every Market Town through the ſaid County. This to be inforced by his Majeſty's Royal Proclamation, requiring and commanding all chief Magiſtrates of the ſaid Towns, to have the ſame read for at leaſt, three market days following each other, between the hours of twelve and two on the ſaid Days, and to continue to read the ſame on the firſt principle Market Day in every Month, for the ſpace of one whole Year; Likewiſe ſtrictly requiring the ſaid * Magiſtrates to exert themſelves

---

As the country Magiſtrates deal in *Farming* as much as they can, it is not to be expected that *they* will act in this caſe, but as the town magiſtrates are ſufferers in like manner with the people, when they are particularly pointed at, and enjoined by a ſpecial command of this kind, it will exempt them from being counted ſingular, or buſy bodies, when acting for the public good.

themſelves to the utmoſt of their power, in endeavouring to detect all mealman, badgers, dealers in corn and others, who ſhall buy any ſort of corn by ſample, and all who may be found buying any corn above the quantity of one buſhel of any kind, at any place out of the public market, appointed by Law or Cuſtom. And likewiſe all perſons buying any butter, cheeſe, poultry, eggs, or any other ſort of proviſions, whereby the ſame may be hindered from being brought and exhibited for public ſale in the market place of the ſaid Towns. And likewiſe ſtrictly requiring the ſaid Magiſtrates to proſecute every ſuch offender or offenders, who ſhall tranſgreſs as aforeſaid, after the three firſt readings of the ſaid Proclamation. And on the ſaid Magiſtrates refuſing or delaying ſo to do, be made to anſwer the ſame, as the laws in that caſe ſhall direct. And likewiſe to recommend to the protection of the ſaid Magiſtrates from any inſults that may be made on them, all and every ſuch perſon or perſons who ſhall give information as above, and to take care that ſuch ſum or ſums ſo forfeited be punctually paid to all ſuch perſons who ſhall give the ſaid informations.

But as the higlers (ſo called) about London, do not hinder, but bring many thouſands of various articles to the London Markets, which would otherwiſe never be brought, I ſubmit whether they may not be exempted from being liable to ſuch proſecutions, as likewiſe *Bear-key*, which cannot ſupply London with corn any other way than by ſample.

F I N I S.

themselves the bounds of their power, in avoiding to detect all mealmen, badgers, regrators, and other, who shall buy any corn by sample, and all who may be found buying any corn above the quantity of one bushel of any kind, at any place out of the public market, appointed by Law or Custom. And likewise all persons buying any butter, cheese, poultry, eggs, or any other sort of provisions, whereby the same may be hindered from being brought and exhibited for public sale in the market place of the said Town. And likewise strictly requiring the said Magistrates to prosecute every such offender or offenders, who shall transgress as aforesaid, after the three first meetings of the said Proclamation. And on the said Magistrates refusing or delaying to so do, be made to answer the same in the Court in that case shall direct. And likewise to recommend to the protection of the said Magistrates from any insults that may be made on them, all and every such person or persons who shall give information as above, and to take care that such sum or sums to forfeited be punctually paid to all such persons who shall give the said information.

But as the higler (so called) upon London, do not hinder, but bring many thousands of various articles to the London Markets, which would otherwise not be brought, I submit whether they may not be exempted from being liable to such prosecutions, as likewise [illegible] which cannot supply London with corn any other way than by sample.

THE END.